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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
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(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

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1. The Arrest.

- a. The AVH has its own prison at F8 utca, Budapest I. On the top floor of this building is a special section where only a restricted few of the AVH personnel are permitted to enter; it is also here that the AVH holds its more important prisoners such as Archbishop Groesz and the members of the Kádár group and probably of the Gábor Péter group. Previous to fall of 1950, Andrassy ut 60 housed AVH prisoners, including Cardinal Mindszenty and Rajk.
- b. When an ordinary arrest is made, the prisoner is taken to F8 utca and is booked. Guards take away from him all his valuables and personal effects. Of his clothing, his shoestrings, belt, and necktie are taken away; even the metal taps of shoes are removed, as well as any metal buckles on the trousers. Following this, the prisoner is put into a one-man cell, the average cell being about 5 X 7 feet, barely large enough to hold a cot. Besides the cot there is nothing else in the cell.
- c. The cell is lighted by means of a strong bulb which is enclosed behind an iron screen above the cell door. The door is made of solid metal which has a small peephole that can be opened only from the outside. There are no windows in most of the cells. Where there are windows, a metal barrier on the outside permits the prisoner to view only the sky.

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25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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2. Interrogation.

- a. Generally the prisoner is interrogated immediately after he is stripped of his possessions and possible suicide weapons. Seldom do more than a few hours pass before the first interrogation.
- b. Interrogations are carried on in rooms set aside for this purpose in the F8 utca building. All of these rooms are soundproof and are equipped with a desk, three or four chairs, and a telephone. Normally only the prisoner and his interrogator are present during the interrogation. Differing techniques are used on prisoners, according to pre-arranged plans, depending on the interrogator's analysis of his prisoner's strong and weak points; following each interrogation, the questioner studies his own performance or discusses it with his superior.
- c. The purpose of the first interrogation usually is to get to know the prisoner. The reason for the arrest will probably not be brought up at this time. The questioner will be very courteous, and will ask his man about his past and present life. This will go on for eight hours a day, for two weeks or more. Or the prisoner might be questioned on a round-the-clock basis for seven days straight, still in a courteous manner, by a team of interrogators. The interrogators will query him on all sorts of details of his life, noting carefully whether the prisoner volunteers information which will tie him in with what the AVH is holding him for. A guilty prisoner will normally avoid such events or details, which will be a strong point of attack for the interrogators at a later stage when they hammer away at him to find out why he omitted any mention of certain events if he is innocent. During this early period the prisoner is fed regularly and is permitted use of the toilet.
- d. Following the detailed interrogation on the prisoner's life (the first complete chronology may vary from one day to two weeks in narration and interrogation), the questioner may ask the prisoner to go over the events again, still in detail; or perhaps the interrogator may select one or two weeks, or months, or years of the prisoner's past and question him over and over again on the particular period.
- e. After the interrogator has questioned the prisoner about his past generally, he will begin to pin the prisoner down to the particular events about which the AVH is concerned. Or as a twist, he may let the prisoner talk on any subject. The choice of subject is left to the prisoner, and the interrogator may make no comment at all for hours; even at the end of a session he may send the prisoner back to the cell without a comment about the prisoner's performance.
- f. Sometimes the specific charge against the prisoner is put to him point-blank: "We know you met with the American agent Blank at such a place on such a night, and that you gave him the following information. You might as well tell us all." Or the interrogator may be indirect and ask, "What do you know about Mr. Blank?" or, "Whom do you meet when you go out to the restaurant to eat?" or, "Who are your friends and on what basis do you maintain contact with them?" The interrogator has an infinite range here by which to approach his target, and he always begins by a pre-arranged scheme for a particular session with the prisoner. Again, the interrogator may seem satisfied with the response and encourage the prisoner, although actually getting nowhere. Some day, perhaps after a series of long sessions,

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the officer might ask the prisoner only one question, for example, "Why did you meet Mr. Blank on such a night?" and if the prisoner starts out on one of the old, fruitless explanations, the questioner may send him back to his cell within five minutes, call him back after a half hour, send him back, and so on, until either the prisoner begins to talk or else the questioner thinks it time to change his tactics.

- g. During the course of the questioning, the interrogator looks for opportunity to impress the accused with the fact that the AVH knows all about him, even down to most insignificant details, so as to convey the idea that it also knows of the events or information he is striving to hide or deny. Although weeks may have passed, the interrogator (and his associates) may continue to be pleasant and even sympathetic, but still insisting on more frankness or a greater degree of recollection on the part of the prisoner. The interrogator is deliberately patient, kind, unruffled, and soft-spoken. This technique may lead to the required confession. During the course of the friendly interrogation, the prisoner, outside of interrogation hours, adheres to the normal prison routine and is not in any way tortured or inconvenienced beyond the normal shortcomings of the prison routine.
- h. In cases where the interrogator's pleasant tactics do not succeed, he can fall back on a series of methods, all of which are designed to humiliate the prisoner and to rob him of any human feelings. The methods listed below can be and have been applied in infinite combinations; also they can be and have been combined with tactics of alternating kindness and brutality, or the prisoner has been subjected to humiliations under protestations of sincerest regrets on the part of the interrogator, who tells the prisoner that it is only the latter's stubbornness or poor memory that forces such practices. Or, again, the brutality of practice is combined with brutality of manner-- cursing, threats of greater demoralization, of imprisonment for life under these indignities, of horrible death tortures, etc. In addition to the interrogation techniques the living conditions themselves in the prison are designed to break down the prisoner's resistance. For example, one must sleep with arms outside the covers; one will be awakened immediately if he begins to snore; one is allowed to the toilet only at a specified time of the day; a bright light shines into one's cell day and night.

3. Physical Techniques Used During Interrogation.

- a. Physical techniques to break down the prisoner during interrogation may begin with the relatively simple ones. A bright light is shone in the faces of the prisoners during interrogation; at such occasions the interrogator stands outside the light's rays or behind the prisoner, so that the latter is aware of the man's presence only by his voice. Another common practice is to have the prisoner stand during the interrogation sessions, with sessions lasting anywhere from minutes to even a week, with interruptions only to permit the prisoner to eat and go to the toilet. During the questioning, the interrogator can alternately shout at and threaten the prisoner, and then try to cajole him with soft words. A variation from the standing routine is to make the prisoner squat down and remain in this position for hours on end. Either standing or squatting, the prisoner may be ordered to extend

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his arms and to keep them extended indefinitely. Sometimes the prisoner is forced to assume a position halfway between standing and squatting, with knees bent, torso erect, and arms extended. In any of these positions, the prisoner may be ordered to bark aloud, or to meow, or to crow and flap his arms. This may go on for a few seconds, or for a quarter of an hour. After about an hour of squatting or bending the average prisoner faints. Sometimes, when the sweat is breaking out on the prisoner's brow, the questioner will ask him if he is tired. The invariable answer is yes. Then the man is ordered to lie down on a chair, with his back on the seat of the chair; again he must extend his arms and keep his heels off the floor. Usually a prisoner cannot take more than half an hour of this chair routine; either the interrogator tells him to get up or else the man collapses. At this point the interrogator may very solicitously tell him to go back to his cell to rest, but he will also tell the guard in a low voice to order the prisoner to stay on his feet while in his cell. During all of the above practices, the interrogator will be posing questions to his prisoner; on the other hand, long periods--hours even--may pass without a word being exchanged.

- b. Interrogation may go on for two or three days under the above conditions without the prisoner being allowed to eat or drink or sleep. After a few days, the interrogator may have a meal brought up and placed on his desk; he will then tell the prisoner that if he talks he can have his meal. Or else, someone may walk in with a can of water with which to water the flowers in the room, while the thirsty prisoner looks on. Again, the prisoner may not be allowed to go to the toilet. Prisoners, particularly women, may at some time during interrogation be ordered to remove their clothing and answer questions for hours naked.
- c. To vary routines, the interrogator may place a sheet of paper between the wall and the prisoner's forehead, and order the prisoner not to let the paper fall. Again, the prisoner may be ordered to sing or to whistle, or to dance around the room. He may, at some other time, be bundled into an overcoat and placed right up against a hot radiator, so that within ten minutes or so he is drenched in sweat.
- d. If the above techniques (along with some refinements that source could not recall) do not succeed, the interrogator will eventually resort to beating the prisoner. Source states that AVH practice is not to beat prisoners, since prisoners eventually confess anyway. However, with the consent of his superior, the interrogator may beat the prisoner, but beatings are rare.

4. Mental Techniques Used During Interrogation.

- a. In conjunction with the physical techniques, interrogations employ certain mental techniques with which to break down the prisoner. With these, as with the former, the interrogator will usually approach the prisoner in a sympathetic way, trying to impress on the prisoner that it is his own recalcitrance, poor memory, or degeneracy which forces him into the condition under which he presently is; in other words, he is his own worst enemy. All he has to do is become frank and reveal all that he has done wrong; he will then be removed from all unpleasant surroundings, and efforts would be made to obtain mercy for him.

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- b. It is very common practice for interrogators to keep in the prisoner's mind a picture of himself languishing in prison for life while his family suffers all sorts of indignities as a result of his crimes. If he has a child that he loves, the interrogator will play on the idea that the prisoner will never see the child again, that is, unless he cooperates, in which case he may be sentenced to only a few years in prison. The interrogator then will paint idyllic scenes of the man's family circumstances following his release from prison after two, three, or five years.
- c. When it is known that the prisoner loves his wife very much, the interrogator will either find some instance of the man's infidelity or make one up with which to threaten the man's exposure to his wife. The interrogator will promise not to reveal this infidelity to the wife if the man admits his guilt.
- d. From another family angle, the interrogator very often tells the prisoner that because of his stubbornness and magnitude of the crime which he is known to have committed, he is forcing the state to take into custody all the members of his family, or perhaps they have already been put under arrest. If the prisoner cooperates with the state, his family will not be molested, and he himself may rejoin them in a few years. However, if he persists, and tries the patience of the AVH too long, his whole family will suffer what he has suffered and will be sentenced to long prison terms, while he himself may be lucky if he is not sentenced to death.
- e. Again, the interrogator will heap sympathy on the prisoner, showing his recognition of the fact that the prisoner is only an unfortunate victim of a shrewd and unscrupulous enemy of the state, whereas the prisoner is basically an honest, hard-working man.
- f. At other times the interrogator will insist that he does not really need any information from the prisoner. The whole conspiracy is known, and the case will come to trial. All concerned will be given fair judgment--all except the prisoner, who will remain in the AVH prison forever. No one will ever know where he is; no one will ever demand or receive information about him.
- g. If the prisoner is known to be a religious man, the interrogator will play on the guilt-before-God routine. If the prisoner lies, the interrogator will remind him that this is a sin for which he will be punished in the hereafter. If the prisoner is suspected of murder, this too will be played up as eternal punishment unless he confesses now and expiates his crime in this world. He is promised the visit of a minister or priest to whom he can tell all his sins and receive spiritual comfort.
- h. With other prisoners, an ideological approach may be made. The strength and unity and the righteous aims of the people's democracies working together with the Soviet Union are pictured to the prisoner as eventually succeeding in building a workers' paradise throughout the world. The prisoner was therefore wrong in trying to work with the Americans (or some other group), since these are imperialists looking for new slave-workers colonies through which to further their own selfish ends. The prisoner should then see the error of his ways and cooperate in the building of the workers' paradise and the

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destruction of western fascism. Regardless of his crime, he is now an enemy of the state, and only by confessing and by throwing himself on the mercy of the court can hope to be free again someday; otherwise, the state will demand the extreme penalty of him—either life imprisonment or death.

5. Prison Conditions.

- a. Generally all of the prisoners live under the same conditions in the prison. However, special activities are prescribed off and on for all of the prisoners during the weeks or months that they are undergoing interrogation. The general conditions will be described first, followed by the individual treatments prescribed at varying times for the prisoners.
- b. The prisoners are awakened at 0500 each day. Their first duty is to clean out their cells, which consists mainly of covering the cot with the one or two blankets available. Breakfast is at 0700, consisting of some sort of soup. Lunch is at 1300, of soup and some stew, with meat available about once a week. Supper is given at about 1800-1900. All meals are brought to the cells. Everyone is supposed to go to bed at 2200.
- c. During the day, the prisoner is not allowed to sleep or even to lie down on his cot. He either stands, or sits on the edge of his cot. There is complete silence on the prison floors. The prisoners are not permitted to speak unless spoken to by a guard.
- d. Other treatments depend on the planning of the prisoner's interrogator. Interrogations take place generally from 0800-1300, and from 1800-0100 or 0200 the next morning. There are ordinarily no afternoon interrogations. Thus the prisoner does not sleep more than 3 hours a night normally. Where the plan calls for it, and this is as often as not, the prisoner is interrogated at any time during the day, or for days at a stretch.
- e. Some prisoners are ordered to stand at all times in the cell during the day, and often through the night. The prisoner may be given paper and pencil and ordered to write--on a given subject or on anything he wants--in which case he has to write until ordered to stop. Many times he has to write through the night. At other times, the prisoner may be handcuffed for days at a time. He may be transferred from a lighted cell to one that is pitchblack, or be placed into a closet 70 cm. square, in which he can do no more than squat. This closet is very cold and absolutely dark; even people of great endurance faint after an hour in the closet.
- f. The prisoner may suddenly be deprived of some of his meals. He may get only one meal a day for weeks, or only bread and water, or he may not be given any food for days or a week at a stretch.
- g. If the prisoner is worn out and the interrogator wants to continue, he may order that the man be placed under an ice-cold shower, with or without clothing, in order to revive him. Following the shower, the prisoner is taken back to his cell, where he may remain naked, or put into his clothing, or remain in his drenched clothing, as the interrogator orders. Guards merely obey the orders of the interrogator. They cannot talk to the prisoners, indicate any emotion in any way, or indicate what is next in store for the prisoner.

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6. Drugs.

[redacted] never heard of the use of drugs by the AVH. [redacted] it possible that drugs have been used. Following the Mindszenty trial, there were strong denials within the AVH to the personnel that the AVH uses any kind of drugs during interrogations.

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7. Conclusion.

The techniques and conditions detailed above are [redacted] used in a countless number of ways on the prisoners. The plan followed by the interrogator is always worked out beforehand. Although to the prisoner there may be no logic or sequence in his being given an icy shower in one minute and in the next a cigarette and a cup of hot soup, the interrogator in his own way has figured this out as a likely regimen to help him reach his goal--to obtain the confession required from the prisoner.

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